

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L STOCKHOLM 0779

E.O. 11652: GDS

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SUBJECT: BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON SWEDISH CABINET MEMBERS

REF: STATE 22748

1. PROFESSIONAL AND PERSONAL EVALUATIONS OF SWEDISH CABINET MEMBERS REQUESTED IN REFTEL SUPPLIED HERWITH.

2. LIDBOM, CARL. BORN MARCH 2, 1926, STOCKHOLM. MARRIED. PRESENTLY MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO WITH MAIN RESPONSIBILITY IN LEGAL FIELD. IS CONSIDERED ONE OF MOST INTELLIGENT, CAPABLE, AND INTRANSIGENT MEMBERS OF SOCDEM PARTY. HAS BEEN MENTIONED AS POSSIBLE POTENTIAL SUCCESSOR TO OLOF PALME. IS CONTROVERSIAL BECAUSE OF UNCOMPROMISING ATTITUDE TOWARD BOURGEOIS PARTIES. HAS BEEN OUTSPOKENLY CRITICAL OF USA IN PAST. CLEVER AND INFLUENTIAL WITH A BRILLIANT MIND, LIDBOM IS A MAN TO WATCH. HIS ENGLISH IS GOOD TO EXCELLENT.

3. GIEJER, J. LENNART. BORN SEPTEMBER 14, 1909. MARRIED. MINISTER OF JUSTICE SINCE 1969. ONE OF WEAK LINKS IN CABINET. FORMER JUDGE NOT PREVIOUSLY ACTIVE IN POLITICS; HE HAS MADE MANY CONTROVERSIAL AND POLITICALLY EMBARRASSING PUBLIC STATEMENTS. A LEFTIST, HE IS REGARED AS A POLITICAL LIBILITY FOR PALME. A DOGMATIC LIBERAL, HE IS INTOLERANT OF CONTRARY OPINIONS. NOT PARTICULARLY FRIENDLY TOWARD U.S. ENGLISH IS FAIR TO GOOD.

4. LEIJON, ANNA-GRETA. BORN JUNE 30, 1939, STOCKHOLM. DIVORCED. ASSISTANT MINISTER OF LABOR, YOUNGEST FEMALE
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MINISTER IN SWEDISH HISTORY. SERIOUS AND BUSINESSLIKE IN

A PLEASANT WAY. A TECHNICIAN RATHER THAN A POLITICIAN, SHE SEEMS COMPETENT AND CAPABLE. IS FRIENDLY TOWARD US, FEELING SWEDES HAVE MUCH TO LEARN FROM US IN LABOR LEGISLATION. SPEAKS ENGLISH FAIRLY WELL.

5. LUNDKVIST, SVANTE. BORN JULY 20, 1919 ESKILSTUNA. MARRIED. CABINET MEMBER SINCE 1965 IN (A) COMMUNICATIONS, (B) PHYSICAL PLANNING AND LOCAL GOVT, (C) AGRICULTURE SINCE 1973. A HARD-WORKING, FRIENDLY MODEST PERSON WITH COMMON SENSE, LUNDKVIST IS AN INFLUENTIAL MEMBER OF SOCDEM PARTY. HAS NO SPECIAL COMPETENCE OR INTEREST IN AGRICULTURE, RELYING ON STAFF TO DO GROUNDWORK. HAS GENERAL INTEREST IN ALL POLITICAL MATTERS. ENGLISH IS ONLY FAIR.

6. SIGURDSEN, GERTRUD. BORN 1923, TUNABERG. DIVORCED. MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO ADMINISTERING FOREIGN AID PROGRAM. RECENTLY LOST POWER STRUGGLE WITH MFA OFFICIAL LENNART KLACKENBERG, OFFICIALY HER SUBORDINATE OVER SENDING AID ONLY TO POLITICALLY PROGRESSIVE (READ SOCIALIST OR LEFT-LEANING) POOR COUNTRIES. SHE OPPOSED THIS PREVIOUSLY, BUT NOW FOLLOWS KLACKENBERG LINE. NOT MEMBER OF CABINET'S INNER CIRCLE. GOOD COMMAND OF ENGLISH. HAS BEEN OCCASIONALLY CRITICAL OF US.

7. ASPLING, SVEN. BORN AUGUST 12, 1928, STOCKHOLM. MARRIED. MINISTER OF SOCIAL AFFAIRS SINCE 1962. AN OLD CONSERVATIVE SOCDEM WHOM MANY YOUNG RADICAL ELEMENTS OF PARTY FEEL IS RIPE FOR REPLACEMENT. CHARMING AND PLEASANT WITH A GOOD BUT NOT GREAT MIND. IS FAIRLY WELL-DISPOSED TOWARD US. ENGLISH IS FAIR.

8. NORLING, BENGT. BORN JANUARY 24, 1925, IN MALMO. MARRIED. LONG TIME LABOR LEADER, ATTACHED TO LO IN STOCKHOLM SINCE 1965. BECAME MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS IN 1969.
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